

Grocery Checker Section

What grocery checkers should know

The WIC contract: The owner of your store has a contract to provide food for WIC Nutrition Program participants. The contract explains the legal responsibilities of the store owner, check cashing procedure, minimum stocking requirements, approved foods, and the consequences for failing to follow the terms of the agreement.

It is important for all employees to know that following the WIC requirements will allow the store to be paid for the WIC checks they accept. In addition, failing to follow the requirements will, at the very least, cost your employer money in the form of checks not paid, and at the worst, will cost your employer a disqualification from the WIC Nutrition Program, and potentially from the Food Stamp Program as well.

Compliance with the WIC contract: Retailer compliance relies on the checkers. The checkers are faced with correcting improper choices made by WIC customers and helping the customers have a good WIC shopping experience.

When the WIC shopping experience does not go well, retailers, clinic staff or customers report complaints to the WIC office. Retailer complaints are potentially indicators of noncompliance and are one reason a retailer may be selected for monitoring or an investigation.

Importance of good customer service: When WIC receives a complaint of a discourteous checker, it is usually because of a miscommunication at the check stand. Sometimes it is the result of the tone of voice or body language used or perceived during the transaction, or a disagreement about a food item. It may also be the result of an inappropriate comment made during the transaction. Good customer service practices and use of retailer reference material should minimize this issue.

Customer confidentiality: Any information a checker learns about a customer or client during a WIC transaction must be kept confidential. For example, it would be a breach of confidentiality to say to a friend, "Did you know Wendy Wick is on WIC?" In addition, stores must not post names or other customer information in any area where every customer could see. Also, if calling for manager assistance with a WIC transaction over the store intercom, don't identify "WIC" over the intercom.

Civil Rights complaints: The state WIC office is mandated to refer discrimination complaints based on race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability directly to the Office of Civil Rights, United States Department of Agriculture.

WIC approved food

Changes in four food categories: There are additions and deletions in the juice, cheese, tuna and infant formula categories. All other food categories remain the same. Juice and cheese are printed on the back of the check. Tuna is approved in water packed chunk light only. Infant formula is always printed on the face of the check by brand name and can size. There are no exceptions.

If a customer uses a green check the juice and cheese printed on the back of the green check is allowed. If a customer uses the new salmon-colored check, the juice and cheese printed on the back of the salmon check is allowed. There are no exceptions.

WIC Approved Foods



Effective
April 1, 2006 to March 31, 2009

Cereals for women and children



Important information

- WIC approves only the specific cereal listed on the back of the WIC check. (The cereal is pictured in the WIC Food Brochure and this handbook.)
- No other cereal is approved.
- Cereals can be purchased in combinations up to the amount listed on the check.
- Some WIC checks have the choice of breakfast or infant cereal printed on the front of the check for special nutritional concerns. The customer can purchase a combination of these two types of cereal when both are listed on the check.
- WIC customers may need help adding up the total ounces of cereal to stay at 36 oz. or less.
- No individual serving packages are allowed.
- Cereals fortified with calcium are allowed.

$$\boxed{12 \text{ oz}} + \boxed{9 \text{ oz}} + \boxed{9 \text{ oz}} = 30 \text{ ounces}$$

$$\boxed{12 \text{ oz}} + \boxed{12 \text{ oz}} + \boxed{12 \text{ oz}} = 36 \text{ ounces}$$

Cereals for women and children

Approved		Not approved
<p>(cold, plain only)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Cheerios ■ Multi-Grain Cheerios ■ Corn Chex Rice Chex Wheat Chex  ■ Kellogg's Corn Flakes 	<p>(hot, plain only)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Kellogg's Special K ■ Kix ■ Life ■ Post Grape Nut Flakes ■ Post Grape Nuts ■ Cream of Wheat 1 minute, 2 ½ minute, and 10 minute (1 lb. 12 ounce box) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Honey Nut Cheerios■ Apple Cinnamon Cheerios■ Team Cheerios■ Frosted Cheerios■ Berry Burst Cheerios■ Multi-Bran Chex■ Honey Nut Chex■ Frosted Mini-Chex■ Kellogg's Frosted Flakes■ Kellogg's Corn Flakes with Real Bananas■ Kellogg's Special K Red Berries■ Kellogg's Special K Low Carb■ Berry-Berry Kix■ Cinnamon Life■ Private labels, store brands■ Individual serving sizes■ Any cereal not listed on the back of the check




Juice



Important information

- WIC approves only the specific juice listed on the back of the WIC check. (WIC juices are pictured in the WIC Food Brochure and this handbook.)
- No other juice is allowed.
- WIC juice can be purchased in combinations up to the amount listed on the check.
- Customers can combine 46 ounce cans and frozen juice.
- **Plastic bottles are not allowed.**
- WIC juices are 100% juice with no sugar added.
- WIC juice with calcium added is allowed.

Juice frozen

Approved	Not approved
<p>Frozen juices (10, 11.5, & 12 ounces)</p> <div> <p>■ Old Orchard 100% Juices - (dark green lid and pull strip)</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% Orange Juice • Calcium fortified Orange Juice • Apple Juice • Ruby Red Grapefruit Juice • Grape (white or purple) • 100% Pineapple Juice </div> <div> <p>■ Old Orchard blends - 100% juice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apple Cherry • Apple Cranberry • Apple Kiwi Strawberry • Apple Passion Mango • Apple Raspberry • Apple Strawberry Banana • Cranberry Blend • Cranberry Raspberry • Fruit Punch • Pineapple Orange • Pineapple Orange Banana </div> <div> <p>■ Minute Maid juices</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original Orange • Original Orange with Calcium • Country Style Orange • Orange with Extra Vitamins C & E, plus Zinc • Pulp-free Orange • Reduced Acid Orange • Grapefruit (with Calcium) </div> <div> <p>■ Minute Maid blends (100% juice)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orange Passion with Calcium • Orange Tangerine with Calcium <p>■ Tree Top Apple Juice (green label)</p>  </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Welch's frozen grape juices ■ Welch's frozen blends ■ Tree Top Three Apple Blend ■ Dole frozen pineapple ■ Dole blends ■ Plastic bottles ■ Glass bottles ■ Paper cartons ■ 6 ounce frozen cans ■ Organic juice ■ Freshly squeezed juice ■ Beverages labeled "juice drinks", or "juice cocktails" ■ "Infant" juices ■ Private labels, store brands ■ Any juice not listed on the back of the check

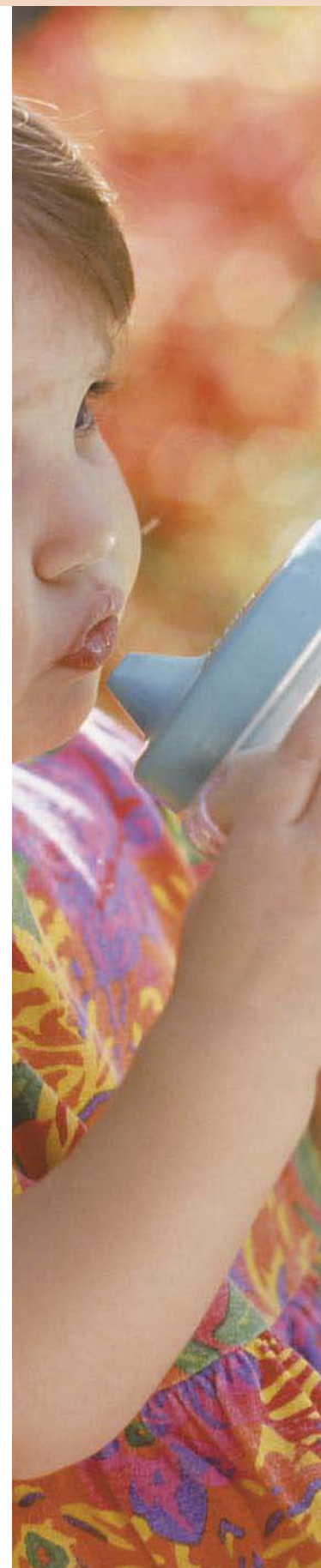
Juice 46 oz cans full strength

Approved	Not approved
<p>46 ounce cans (full strength)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tree Top Apple Juice (green label)  ■ Dole Pineapple 100% Juice  ■ Campbell's Tomato Juice  ■ Welch's 100% Grape Juice (purple or white)   ■ Essential Antioxidants V8® 100% Vegetable Juice  ■ Texsun Ruby Red Grapefruit Juice  ■ Texsun Orange Juice  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Welch's frozen grape juices ■ Welch's frozen blends ■ Tree Top Three Apple Blend ■ Dole frozen pineapple ■ Dole blends ■ Plastic bottles ■ Glass bottles ■ Paper cartons ■ 6 ounce frozen cans ■ Organic juice ■ Freshly squeezed juice ■ Beverages labeled "juice drinks", or "juice cocktails" ■ "Infant" juices ■ Private labels, store brands ■ Any juice not listed on the back of the check

Milk

Important information

- WIC approves only cow's milk up to the amount printed on the check.
- Customers can buy any brand of milk.
- Customers can combine brands and sizes of milk. Quarts, half-gallons and gallons are allowed. The combination of containers must not add up to more than the amount listed on the check.
- Half-pints and pint containers are not approved.
- Milk must be pasteurized and fortified with vitamins A & D.
- Customers can buy powdered milk and evaporated milk if it is listed on the check.
- If different types of milk, such as powdered and fresh fluid milk, are listed on the same check, the customer can buy both types of milk. It must add up to no more than the amount on the check.
- If the WIC check states: fluid milk, 2% fat or less, whole milk is not allowed.



Milk

Approved	Not approved
<p>Fluid cow's milk</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whole (homogenized up to 5%) ■ Reduced fat (2%) ■ Low fat, (1%) ■ Fat-free, skim, or non-fat ■ Lactose-free ■ Lactaid ■ Lactose reduced ■ Acidophilus ■ Kosher ■ Skim Deluxe, Trim Deluxe, Skim Royal, Skim Supreme ■ Organic <p>(canned evaporated)*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Regular ■ Low fat ■ Skim <p>(powdered)*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Regular ■ Reduced fat ■ Non-fat ■ Skim <p>* If a WIC customer wants canned evaporated milk or powdered milk, it must be printed on the WIC check.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Raw or unpasteurized ■ Flavored milk such as chocolate ■ Soy milk ■ Silk ■ Rice milk ■ Low carb dairy beverage ■ UHT (shelf stable) quart boxes ■ Buttermilk ■ Sweetened condensed milk ■ Goat milk ■ Lactaid with soy protein ■ Whipping cream or half & half ■ Pint or half-pint sizes ■ Glass bottles

Cheese

Important information

- Only domestic (made in the U.S.A.) is allowed.
- WIC approves only the types of cheese listed on the back of the WIC check.
- Customers can buy any brand as long as it is an approved type.
- Customers can combine blocks of cheese up to the amount listed on the check.
- The smallest package approved is 8 ounces.
- No substitutes are allowed.
- Customers are allowed to buy non-fat, reduced fat and “light” cheese.
- You can slice WIC approved block cheese for a WIC customer if it is a free service offered to all customers.

The “Not Approved” list does not include everything. This is a list of cheese and cheese products that are often questioned.




Cheese

Approved	Not approved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cheddar, medium, mild, and sharp yellow and white <div> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Unsliced Kraft Deluxe American (This cheese comes in a blue box, sometimes located by the crackers with other Kraft cheese products.) <div> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Monterey Jack (plain only) <div> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mozzarella (whole milk or part skim) <div> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ String cheese (white mozzarella only) in a multi-stick bag <div> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Non-fat, reduced fat or "light" cheese ■ Kosher ■ Vegetarian Kosher ■ Low sodium cheese 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cheese from the service deli ■ Individual string cheese sticks ■ Sliced, grated, cubed, or shredded ■ Extra sharp (i.e. Tillamook black label) ■ Colby or Co-Jack ■ Pepper Jack ■ Swiss ■ Random weights ■ Cheddar-flavored string cheese or other flavors such as smoke or wine ■ Fresh mozzarella balls ■ Imported ■ Canned (i.e. Cougar Gold) ■ Jars (i.e. Cheez Whiz) ■ Organic ■ Mexican-style cheese ■ Raw milk cheese ■ Imitation cheese, cheese food such as Velveeta, or cheese spreads ■ Cream cheese ■ Ricotta cheese ■ Cottage cheese ■ Soy cheese and cheese flavored tofu ■ Parmesan cheese ■ Goat or sheep cheese

Peanut butter

Important information

- The label must state "peanut butter."
- WIC allows 16 to 18 ounce jars of commercially processed peanut butter.
- Customers can buy any brand and can choose creamy, smooth, chunky, extra-chunky or crunchy.

Approved	Not approved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 16 to 18 ounce jars  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Any national or store brand, commercially processed, peanut butter ■ Creamy/smooth ■ Crunchy/extra chunky ■ Chunky ■ Skippy Roasted Honey Nut ■ Adams regular peanut butter and Adams "No-Stir" ■ Simply Jif 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reduced fat peanut butter spread ■ Low carb peanut butter spread ■ Skippy "Natural" (spread) ■ Skippy "Squeez" It (tube) ■ Peanut butter and honey ■ Added jelly, jam, such as "Goober", or added chocolate ■ Freshly ground ■ Gourmet ■ Organic peanut butter ■ Maranatha brand ■ Bulk peanut butter ■ Other nut butters (i.e. almond, soy, sesame tahini, cashew, sunflower) ■ Peanut butter slices



Carrots



Important information


- WIC approves fresh, frozen or canned whole or baby peeled carrots.
- Customers can buy any brand in packages (except snack packs) or bulk up to the amount on the check.
- Organic carrots are approved.

Approved	Not approved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Up to 2 pounds■ Any brand■ Organic■ Fresh, whole or baby  <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Peeled or unpeeled■ Frozen (plain), any shape  <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Canned (plain), any shape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Carrots with butter, sauces or glazes■ Carrots combined with other vegetables■ Snack packs■ Pre-cooked from the deli case

Eggs

Important information

- WIC approves only white chicken eggs.
- Customers can buy any brand of large, medium, or small eggs in one dozen size cartons.



Approved	Not approved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Any brand chicken eggs  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ White eggs only ■ Large, medium, or small ■ Dozen (12 count) cartons only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Brown eggs ■ Jumbo or extra large ■ Specialty eggs such as "Eggland's Best" and "Naturally Nested" ■ Store brand specialty eggs ■ Fertile or free-range eggs ■ Naturally nested eggs ■ Organic eggs ■ Bulk eggs ■ Duck eggs or non-chicken eggs ■ 6 pack carton ■ 18 pack carton ■ Egg Beaters ■ Powdered eggs ■ Hard-cooked eggs



Dry beans, peas or lentils

Important information


- WIC approves any variety of plain dry beans, peas or lentils.
- Customers can buy any brand in one-pound packages or bulk up to one pound.
- Organic beans are approved.

Approved	Not approved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Any brand (national and store brands) ■ Any type of dry beans, peas, or lentils ■ Organic ■ Bagged or bulk ■ 1 pound or less  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Soup mixes with seasoning packets ■ Dry refried beans ■ Additions to plain beans such as rice or barley in a soup mix ■ Canned beans ■ Green beans ■ Frozen beans ■ Barley

Tuna

Important information

- WIC allows only **chunk light tuna packed in water**.
- Customers can buy any brand in any size cans up to the amount listed on the check.

Approved	Not approved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Chunk light only ■ Water- packed ■ Plain ■ Any brand ■ Any size cans - combinations of cans up to amount listed on check 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Albacore ■ Solid white ■ Chunk white ■ Oil-packed ■ Tuna in foil pouches ■ Tuna combined with crackers as a snack pack ■ Tuna labeled for special diets such as "diabetic", "low fat", and "reduced sodium" ■ Tuna labeled as gourmet or filets ■ Smoked tuna/flavored tuna ■ Fresh tuna ■ Dried tuna ■ Imported



Infant formula

Important information

- Customers are only allowed to buy the specific formula named on the check. This includes the can size and type of formula. **The name of the formula and can size is always printed on the front of the WIC check.**
- WIC infants generally receive formula checks for:
 - 31 cans of concentrate per month, or
 - 8 to 10 cans of powdered formula per month, or
 - Occasionally 25 cans of Ready-To-Feed/Ready-To-Use formula, or
 - 108 cans child nutritional such as Pediasure
- **Do not exchange infant formula** purchased using a WIC check for cash, credit, or another brand or type of formula. Ask the WIC customer to contact the WIC clinic for help.
- **Do not allow the purchase of a different brand of formula than what is printed on check**, even with a doctor's prescription. Customers who come into the store with formula prescriptions need to contact the WIC clinic for help.
- **Do not allow a cash refund for infant formula using a WIC check.** Refer the customer back to the WIC clinic.
- **Low iron formula is not approved.**
- **Maintain an adequate inventory of formula at all times.** It is part of your contract with the WIC Program and your service to your customers to be able to meet their needs.
- The WIC Nutrition Program can help provide you with information on the quantity of WIC formula purchased in your store monthly, by brand name and can size. Call 1-800-841-1410, ext 3615 to request that information.
- Rotate your infant formula stock regularly to assure it sells before its expiration date.
- Ask your wholesaler for help if you have expired cans of infant formula.

Infant formula

Approved	Not approved
<p>Milk-based</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enfamil with Iron ■ Enfamil LIPIL with Iron ■ Enfamil LactoFree LIPIL, Iron Fortified ■ Enfamil Gentlease LIPIL, Iron Fortified <p>Soy-Based</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enfamil Prosobee, Iron Fortified ■ Enfamil Prosobee LIPIL, Iron Fortified <p>Special needs formula</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Similac Alimentum Advance, protein hydrolysate formula with iron ■ Enfamil A.R. LIPIL, Iron Fortified ■ Enfamil Nutramigen LIPIL, hypoallergenic formula, Iron Fortified ■ Enfamil EnfaCare LIPIL, Iron Fortified ■ Similac NeoSure Advance with iron <p>The container size listed on the WIC check</p> <p>The formula type - concentrate, powder, Ready to Feed/Ready to Use – listed on the WIC check</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Any brand not listed on the check ■ Low iron ■ Follow-up formulas ■ Toddler formulas ■ Large sized cans of powdered infant formula, for example, 24 ounce, 28.5 ounce, or 32 ounce ■ 8 ounce ready-to-feed ■ Single serving packets ■ Similac Lactose Free ■ Similac with iron ■ Similac with iron Advance ■ Similac Isomil ■ Similac Isomil Advance ■ Nestle Good Start Supreme ■ Nestle Good Start Essentials Soy ■ Enfamil Pregestimil, hypoallergenic formula with MCT oil, iron fortified

Infant cereal

Important information

- WIC has approved only 8 and 16 ounce boxes of plain infant cereal, without fruit. (The cereal is pictured in the WIC food brochure and this handbook.)
- No other cereal is allowed.
- Cereals can be purchased in combinations up to the amount listed on the check.

Approved	Not approved
<p>(Dry, non-fruit) 8 and 16 ounce boxes (plain only)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gerber  ■ Del Monte  ■ Beechnut  ■ Earth's Best organic  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Added fruit or fruit flavored ■ Added formula ■ Jars ■ Cans ■ Individual packets ■ Single servings ■ Six-packs of 1 ounce boxes ■ Teething biscuits

Special nutritionals

Approved	Not approved
<p>Pediasure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ 8 ounce can or plastic bottle■ Any variety■ Any flavor■ With or without fiber	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ensure■ Kindercal■ Pediasure Enteral



Frequently asked questions about WIC foods

Cereals

Q If the boxes of cereal do not add up to 36 ounces, is it okay to go over by a few ounces?

A No. The check states 36 ounces or less.

Q Can customers get cereals other than those listed on the back of the check?

A No. Cereals are brand and type specific.

Q Can customers use club cards, coupons or in-store specials on WIC foods?

A Yes, it helps WIC reduce the cost of food.

Q If a box of cereal has “free additional ounces”, how does that work for WIC?

A If the approved food meets the WIC guidelines for quantity prescribed, but a special promotion gives additional ounces free you may allow the purchase. The extra ounces do not count in the quantity prescribed on the check.

Q If the customer has a “buy one, get one free” coupon, does the free cereal have to be WIC approved?

A No. WIC allows its customers to take advantage of “buy one, get one free” specials, regardless whether the free item is WIC approved. The key is the food WIC pays for must be WIC approved and be listed on the check. If store policy or POS system is to charge the customer for the more expensive items and allow the less expensive item as the free one, the item WIC pays for is always the approved item.

Frequently asked questions about WIC foods

Juice

Q Can customers get a combination of cans of frozen juice and 46 ounce cans?

A Yes, customers can combine cans of frozen and 46 ounce canned juice to get the total number of cans listed on the check.

Q Why can't customers buy juice in plastic bottles?

A Juice in plastic containers cost too much.

Milk

Q Can WIC customer buy any size milk as long as it adds up to what is on the check?

A No. WIC approves quarts, half-gallons and gallons only. Pints and half-pints are not allowed.

Q Can WIC customers get chocolate milk in a "buy one, get one free" special?

A Yes, if the chocolate milk is free.

Q Can WIC customers buy soymilk or rice milk?

A No, WIC only allows cow's milk.

Frequently asked questions about WIC foods

Cheese

Q Why did WIC take the single sticks of string cheese off the approved food list?

A Single sticks of string cheese sold individually are expensive. They are available in bags of eight ounces or more.

Q Can WIC customers get organic cheese if the cheese is one of the approved types?

A No.

Peanut butter

Q Why does WIC not approve low fat peanut butter spreads?

A WIC only approves peanut butter.

Q Do you have to buy store brand peanut butter only?

A No. National brands and store brands are both approved.

Eggs

Q Why can't WIC customers buy organic eggs?

A Organic eggs cost too much.

Q Can WIC customers buy extra large eggs or any other type eggs if they are on sale for the same price as WIC approved eggs?

A No. WIC customers can buy large eggs or smaller.

Frequently asked questions about WIC foods

Infant formula

Q If the store is out of the small cans of powdered formula, can WIC customers buy the larger cans?

A No. Only the can size indicated on the check is allowed.

Q If the WIC customer has a check for 4 cans of formula and you only have 3 cans in the store, can you provide a different formula?

A No. Only the exact formula name listed on the check is allowed.

Q If the WIC customer has a check for 4 cans of formula and you only have 3 cans in the store can you give a different can size?

A No. Only the exact formula can size listed on the check is allowed.

Q If the WIC customer has a check for 4 cans of formula and you only have 3 cans in the store can you charge for 4 and ask the customer to come back?

A No, you cannot charge for formula the customer does not receive at the time the check is redeemed.

Checks

Important information about WIC checks

A new WIC check design is coming in the summer of 2006! WIC will start using a completely new check design during the summer of 2006. These checks will not be payable to a specific store. Instead, the payee line will read, "Any Washington WIC Approved Store". Retailers will have an identification number that must be stamped on the check. Additionally, as part of the check cashing procedure for this check, checkers are required to identify the customer. These checks will be dual color.

New check color April 1, 2006. Beginning April 1, 2006, the WIC checks will be a salmon color. These checks are payable to specific stores. A new salmon colored food brochure goes with the salmon colored checks. The food list in this handbook also goes with the new salmon colored checks. There are changes in:

- Juice
- Cheese
- Tuna
- Infant formula

Green checks issued before April 1, 2006. As long as the dates on the green checks are valid, checkers can take the checks. Clinics will issue the green checks until March 31, 2006. WIC clients usually get three sets of checks at a time. That means the WIC client who gets three sets of checks on March 31 will have green checks that can be used in April, May and June.

Check processing directions: There are two sets of check processing instructions in this handbook along with pictures of the checks. You will find:

- Processing directions for the retailer specific check (green & salmon colored)
- Processing directions for the check that requires the retailer stamp identification, including customer identification information (salmon coloration)

Checks payable to a specific retailer

Check types

1. Checks are printed by computer in WIC clinics. Checks include:

- Client name and WIC ID number
- **First Day to Use** and **Last Day to Use**
- Store name and street address
- Allowed foods and quantities
- **Not to Exceed** amount (based on **your** store's prices for WIC foods)
- **Actual Purchase Price** box
- Two customer **Signature** boxes

2. Handwritten WIC checks. These include:

- Client name
- **First Day to Use** and **Last Day to Use**
- Store name
- Allowed foods and quantities
- The **Not to Exceed** amount is pre-printed. The **Not to Exceed** amount is higher on the handwritten checks because these checks need to be able to support any of the food packages, including those with special needs formulas. The **Actual Purchase Price** on most checks is much lower.
- Two **Customer Signature** boxes

Information about dates

- All checks have two dates on them: **First Day to Use** and **Last Day to Use**.
- Checks are valid from the **First Day to Use**, up to midnight on the **Last Day to Use**.
- Only take checks with current dates. A common reason for the bank to reject a WIC check is that it is taken too early (post dated).
- If the **Last Day to Use** has passed, the check is expired, or stale dated, do not accept it. Ask the customer to take the check back to the WIC clinic.

Checks payable to a specific retailer

Information about the payee

- Checks are payable to your store only or “Any Washington WIC approved store.”

Information about WIC approved food

- Food to be purchased is listed on the front of the check.
- The food package is a prescription for food with specific nutrients.
- If you are not sure a food is approved, look at the WIC Food Section of this handbook or the WIC Food Brochure.
- You can look at the back of the check for the specific cereal, juice, and types of cheese allowed.
- The amount of food listed on the WIC check is the maximum amount allowed. The customer may buy less, but never more food than the amount printed on the check.
- Do not give WIC customers rain checks, IOUs or cash back if an item is out of stock, or if the customer chooses not to buy an item.
- Do not make formula substitutions.

Information about the Not to Exceed amount

- The bank rejects checks that go over the **Not to Exceed** amount.
- If the purchase goes over the **Not to Exceed** amount, verify that only correct quantities and approved items have been rung up.
- Call the state WIC office at 1-800-841-1410 if the **Actual Purchase Price** of the WIC items is more than the **Not to Exceed** amount and the problem is due to a price change. Be prepared to state your store name and location, the product name and size, and the current unit price of the item.
- Do not ask the WIC customer to pay cash in a WIC transaction. Do not give change to a WIC customer during a WIC transaction.
- Do not ask or tell the customer to take less food.

Checks payable to a specific retailer

Information about the Actual Purchase Price box

- Total the WIC purchase and write the actual purchase amount in this box.
- Write the actual purchase amount in this box before the customer countersigns the check. Write clearly.
- If you make a mistake, you can correct the amount. Follow this procedure:
 - A. Draw one line through the incorrect amount written in the box.
 - B. **Do not use white out or make any erasures.**
 - C. **Clearly write** the correct amount in or as close as possible to the box.
 - D. Ask the person in charge to initial the new amount.


Information about the Customer Signature box

- There are two **Signature** boxes on checks that are payable to a specific store.
- The customer proves her identity and signs the top box at the WIC clinic. The first signature is witnessed by clinic staff.
- The second signature is **signed and verified at the check stand**. The checker witnesses the second signature.


Receipt

- For good customer service, give the receipt to the WIC customer at the end of the WIC transaction.
- You may want to mark the receipt with some type of "WIC" identifier to prevent potential attempts to return WIC food for cash. For example, some stores have a numeric code for WIC transactions that prints on the receipt. Some choose to write on the receipt.

How to redeem checks payable to a specific retailer

 WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH P.O. BOX 47886 - OLYMPIA, WA 98504-7886 1-800-841-1410		ACME Looney Toone Town Bank 99-9999 999		1150662596	
Client ID#: 115016709 Name: Jones, Santhea T		First Day To Use Mar 16, 2006		Last Day To Use Apr 16, 2006	
1 Pay To: Jane Doe's Grocery		WARNING: Original document has an artificial watermark on reverse side			
4 2 Gallon(s) Fluid Milk, fortified Juice - frozen, cans, or plastic bottles (See Back of Check) 4 Dozen Eggs, Large or smaller		5 Not To Exceed \$53.32		3 Signature Verified at WIC Clinic * Signatures Must Match *	
		Actual Purchase Price \$ 6		7 Signature Verified at Store	
1150662596 1150662596 9999999999					

New color April 1, 2006

 WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH P.O. BOX 47886 - OLYMPIA, WA 98504-7886 1-800-841-1410		"Babies were born to be breastfed"		ACME Looney Toone Town Bank 99-9999 999		1150662596	
Client ID# 115016709 Name: Jones, Santhea T		First Day To Use April 1, 2006		Last Day To Use May 1, 2006			
1 Pay To: Jane Doe's Grocery		WARNING: Original document has an artificial watermark on reverse side					
4 2 Gallon(s) Fluid Milk, fortified 2 Juice (see back of check) 1 Dozen Eggs, Large or smaller		5 Not To Exceed \$53.32		3 Signature Verified at WIC Clinic *Signatures Must Match*			
		Actual Purchase Price \$ 6		7 Signature Verified at Store			
1150662842 1150662842 9999999999							

How to redeem checks payable to a specific retailer

1 Accept checks payable to your store.

2 Redeem checks with current dates

- Look at the **First Day to Use**.
- Do not take checks before the **First Day to Use**.
- Look at the **Last Day to Use**.
- Do not take checks after the **Last Day to Use** because they are expired.
- Handwritten checks must be dated.

3 Look for the signature verified at the WIC clinic before starting the transaction

- There must be a signature on the check before ringing up the order.
- If there is no signature on the check, ask for identification. With identification, the customer can sign the check.
- If both signature blocks are pre-signed, tell the customer you cannot accept the check, and ask them to return to the WIC clinic for assistance.

4 Verify WIC foods listed on the check

- **Each check is a separate transaction.**
- Make sure the items and the amount being purchased are listed on the check. **There are no exceptions.**
- If you are not sure the foods are WIC approved, check the WIC Food Section of this handbook, the WIC Food Brochure, or the back of the check.
- Ring up the food in the order listed on the check.
- The customer does not have to purchase all of the food listed, but will not be allowed to get the food they did not purchase later.
- Rain checks, IOU's or cash back are not allowed.

5 Not to Exceed amount

- Total the WIC purchase and compare it to the **Not To Exceed** amount printed on the WIC check. The **Actual Purchase Price** must be no more than the **Not To Exceed** amount.

6 Actual purchase amount

- Write the total amount of the purchase on the check before you ask for the signature.

7 Signature verified at store

- Be sure to get the second signature.
- The checker must witness the signature.
- Signatures must match.

Checks that must be stamped with a retailer stamp ID

Check types

1. Checks are printed by computer in WIC clinics. Checks include:

- Client name and number
- **First Day to Use** and **Last Day to Use**
- **Transaction Date** box
- **"Any Washington WIC Approved Store"** on the payee line
- Allowed foods and quantities
- **Actual Purchase Price** box
- **Customer Signature** box
- Customer names printed by computer under the **Customer Signature** box
- **Retailer Stamp ID** box

2. Checks Handwritten in the Clinic. These include:

- Client name
- **First Day to Use** and **Last Day to Use**
- A **Transaction Date** box
- **"Any Washington WIC Approved Store"** on the payee line
- Allowed food quantities
- **Actual Purchase Price** box
- **Customer Signature** box
- **Retailer Stamp ID** box

Checks that must be stamped with a retailer stamp ID

Information about dates

- All checks have two dates on them: a **First Day to Use** and a **Last Day to Use**.
- Checks are valid from the **First Day to Use**, up to midnight on the **Last Day to Use**.
- Only accept checks with current dates. A common reason for the bank to reject a WIC check is that it is taken too early (post dated).
- Do not take checks before the date in **First Day to Use** box.
- If the **Last Day to Use** has passed, the check is expired, or stale dated. Do not accept it. Ask the customer to take the check back to the WIC clinic.

Information about Transaction Date box

- Checks that require the retailer stamp ID have a **Transaction Date** box between the **First Day to Use** and the **Last Day to Use**.
- Retailers may use the box to write in the date of the transaction and verify the date falls on or in between the first and last day to use the check.
- Filling in the **Transaction Date** box is optional.

Information about the payee

- Checks are payable to Any Washington WIC Approved Store.
- Any retailer with a current Washington WIC contract may accept checks.

Information about food

- Food to be purchased is listed on the front of the check.
- The food package is a prescription for food with specific nutrients.
- If you are not sure if a food is approved, look at the WIC Food Section of this handbook or the WIC Food Brochure.
- You can look at the back of the check for the specific cereal, juice, and types of cheese allowed.
- The amount of food listed on the WIC check is the maximum amount allowed. The customer may buy less, but never more food than the amount printed on the check.
- Do not give WIC customers rain checks, IOUs or cash back if an item is out of stock or if the customer chooses not to buy an item.
- Do not make formula substitutions.

Checks that must be stamped with a retailer stamp ID

Information about the purchase total

- You must update prices quarterly and when there are significant price increases in a food category.

Call the State WIC Office at 1-800-841-1410

Ask for instructions on how to update your prices.

- The bank rejects checks when the purchase amount goes over the food prices on record for the retailers peer group.
- If a check is returned by the bank because the purchase amount exceeds the maximum price for the peer group do the following:

Adjust the price, make the change as stated below, resubmit the check, and notify WIC of the price change.

Information about the Actual Purchase Price box

- Total the WIC purchase and write the actual purchase amount in this box.
- Write the actual purchase amount in this box before the customer signs the check. Write clearly.
- If you make a mistake, you can correct the amount. Follow this procedure:
 - A. Draw one line through the incorrect amount written in the box.
 - B. **Do not use white out or make any erasures.**
 - C. **Clearly write** the correct amount in or as close as possible to the box.
 - D. Ask the person in charge to initial the new amount.

Checks that must be stamped with a retailer stamp ID

Information about the Customer Signature box

- There is one **Customer Signature** box on the check.
- There are one or two customer names printed below the **Customer Signature** box. Only these persons can redeem the WIC check.
- The checker must identify the customer.
- Use acceptable identification. If the identification matches the name printed on the check, mark the box in front of the printed customer name.
- If the customer does not have identification and you do not know the customer, refuse the check.
- If the identification provided by the customer does not match the name(s) printed under the signature box, refuse the check.
- After you identify the customer ask the customer to sign the check.

Information about the Retailer Stamp Identification box

- This space is provided for the retailer to stamp the check with the identification number provided by WIC.
- The stamped ID number assigned to the retailer is used to assure payment for the WIC purchase.
- The number must be readable.

Receipt

- Hand the receipt to the WIC customer at the end of the WIC transaction.
- You may want to mark the receipt with some type of "WIC" identifier to prevent potential attempts to return WIC food for cash. For example, some stores have a numeric code for WIC transactions that prints on the receipt. Some choose to write on the receipt.

How to redeem checks that need a retailer stamp ID

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P.O. BOX 47886 OLYMPIA, WA 98504-7886
1-800-841-1410

"Babies were born to be breastfed"

Southern National Bank
Olympia, WA 98506

64-1968
611

1150662792

Client ID: 115016386 Client Name: Johnson, Jane B
Pay To: Any Washington WIC Approved Store

2 First Day To Use
Aug 16, 2006

Transaction Date

Last Day To Use
Sep 16, 2006

6 Retailer Stamp ID Here

4 Can(s) Enfamil with Iron, powdered, 14.3 oz (yellow can)

3

Actual Purchase Price
\$

4

Retailer must deposit this check within 60 days of "First Day To Use"

Customer Signature - Show ID to match name below **5**

X ☐ Johnson, Mary
☐ Johnson, John

August 2006
10 **1**

11506627926 06119684 2501930

Handwritten Check

Washington State Department of Health
P.O. Box 47886 - Olympia, WA 98504-7886
1-800-841-1410

*** Babies were born to be breastfed ***

Southern National Bank
Marietta, GA

64-1968
611

1150662842

Client Name

First Day to Use

Transaction Date

Last Day to Use

Pay to: **Any Washington WIC Approved Store**

Ounces or Less WIC Cereal (Listed on back of check)	Can(s) Infant Formula - Concentrate, 13 Ounces BRAND NAME:
Pound(s) or less Cheese (Listed on back of check)	Can(s) Infant Formula - Powder, 12.0, 12.8, 12.9, 14.3, 16 Ounces BRAND NAME:
JUICE - Frozen or Canned (Listed on back of check)	Can(s) Infant Formula - Ready-to-Use - 1 quart BRAND NAME:
Pound(s) or less Dry Beans, Peas, Lentils or 16 or 18 Ounces Peanut Butter	Cans or Plastic Bottles - Pediasure, 8 Ounces / 6 Pack
Quart(s) Fluid or Powdered Milk	Ounces Or Less Infant Cereal
Gallon(s) of Milk	Ounces Or Less Canned Water-Packed, Chunk Light Tuna
Half Gallon(s) of Milk	Pound(s) Or Less Carrots, Fresh, Frozen, Or Canned
Can(s) 12 Ounces Evaporated Milk	Pound Dry Beans/Peas/Lentils
Dozen Eggs - Large, Medium, Or Small	

PKG: #CKS: SEQ:

Staff Initials: Issued Date:

VOID

Retailer Stamp ID Number Here

Retailer must deposit this check within 60 days of "First Day to Use"

Check must not exceed \$200.00

Actual Purchase Price
\$

Customer Signature - Show ID to match name below

X **NON-NEGOTIABLE**

DATA ENTRY DONE

How to redeem checks that need a retailer stamp ID

Payee line will state: “Any Washington WIC Approved Store”

1 Identify the customer

- Use appropriate identification such as a driver's license or WIC appointment folder (acceptable forms of identification listed on page 46).
- Indicate the person who will sign the check by marking the box in front of their name.
- If you cannot identify the customer, refuse the check.

2 Redeem checks with current dates

- Look at the **First Day to Use**.
- Do not take checks before the **First Day to Use**
- Look at the **Last Day to Use**.
- Do not take checks after the **Last Day to Use** because they are expired.
- Handwritten checks must be dated.
- You can use the Transaction Date box to write in today's date. The Transaction Date box is optional. You can use this box to help checkers look at the dates carefully.

3 Verify WIC foods listed on the check

- **Each check is a separate transaction.**
- Make sure the items and the amount being purchased are listed on the check. **There are no exceptions.**
- If you are not sure the foods are WIC approved, check the WIC Food Section of this handbook, the WIC Food Brochure, or the back of the check.
- Ring up the food in the order listed on the check.
- The customer does not have to purchase all of the food listed, but will not be allowed to get the food they did not purchase at a later time.
- Rain checks, IOUs or cash back are not allowed.

4 Actual purchase amount

- Write the total amount of the purchase on the check before you ask for the signature.

5 Customer signature box

- Ask the customer to sign the check.
- The name signed must be the same as the name identified under the signature box.

6 Retailer Stamp ID Number box

- Use the stamp provided by WIC to stamp your store's identification number on each check.
- Stamp inside the box.
- Press firmly.
- Use only black ink for the stamp.

WIC customer identification

WIC customer identification

- Grocery checker must identify the customer.
- The ID must match the name printed on the check under the signature box.
- Mark the small box in front of the pre-printed name of the customer using the check.
- The customer signs the check and the grocery checker witnesses the signature.

Acceptable forms of identification*

- Photo identification
 - A driver's license or instruction permit issued by any U.S. state or province of Canada. If the customer's driver's license has expired, he/she must also show a valid temporary driver's license with the expired card.
 - A United States armed forces identification card issued to active duty, reserve, and retired personnel and the personnel's dependents.
 - A merchant marine identification card issued by the United States Coast Guard.
 - A state liquor control identification card
 - A state identification card issued by any U.S. state or province of Canada.
 - An official passport issued by any nation.
 - Enrollment card issued by the governing authority of a federally recognized Indian tribe located in Washington, if the enrollment card incorporates security features comparable to those implemented by the Department of Licensing for Washington drivers' licenses and are recognized by the Liquor Control Board.
- Other identification
 - WIC Appointment Folder
 - Any other identification the store would take when identification of a customer is needed

*** The name on the ID must be the same as one of the names printed under the customer signature box on the check.**

Good customer service

The customer defines good customer service

- Good customer services means two things. Customers get what they need within a reasonable period of time and are treated with respect and dignity.
- No matter how good you believe your service is, if customers don't feel as though they are being treated well, you are not providing quality service.

The importance of good customer service

- You have an impact on the satisfaction of each customer you serve.
- Dissatisfied customers take their business elsewhere.
- Based on the way you treat customers, they decide whether or not to continue shopping at your store.

Complaints help develop good customer service

- When needs are not met, the result is a dissatisfied customer.
- Most customers become unhappy because of a single small incident.
- Most dissatisfied customers don't take the time to complain.
- These "nice customers" never come back and never let you know how they feel.
- Complaining customers give you an opportunity to make things right!

The "3/11 Rule"

- The 3/11 rule suggests if customers are satisfied they will tell 3 people. If they are dissatisfied they will tell 11 people.
- Research suggests most people who have a negative experience don't keep the negative experience to themselves.
- If you can reverse a negative experience, it will work to your advantage.
- Each single complaint could be a sign of a much larger problem.

Customer service chain



Good customer service

First impression

- Customers begin developing their opinions about your store and the service you provide with their first visit.
- A bad first impression is very hard to overcome!

Knowledge

- Customers don't expect you to know everything.
- Customers expect you to be able to find the right answer!

Non-verbal messages

- What you don't say is just as important as what you do say.
- Appear approachable. Have a friendly greeting.

Saying “no” takes practice

- Be knowledgeable.
- Be helpful and willing to suggest alternatives.

The customer

- The customer's mood will affect the transaction.
- If the customer is upset or negative, don't take it personally. Step back, take a deep breath, and tell yourself to be calm.
- Focus on what you can do. Offer your help.
- If the situation continues to escalate, follow your store procedures for handling difficult situations.

Language barriers

If the customer speaks limited English and you don't speak the customer's language, you can:

- Use the WIC Foods brochure with color photos of all the WIC foods as a non verbal tool.
- Call the state WIC office for help accessing an interpreter (1-800-841-1410)
- The state WIC office has access to a translation service by phone to help you communicate with your WIC customers.

Customer compliance noncompliance & complaints

Customer compliance

- WIC clients or caregivers are required to sign an agreement with WIC, similar to a contract, called “Rights and Responsibilities (R&R)” each time they are certified for WIC.
- The R&R lists the rules for cashing WIC checks.
- The R&R is provided in the client/caregiver’s primary language if available. If WIC doesn’t have the R&R form in the client’s language, WIC gives her the form in English with an interpreter.
- By signing the R&R the WIC client/caregiver agrees to:
 - Buy only the food or formula allowed on the WIC checks.
 - Buy only the amount of food or formula listed on the check.
 - Not sell, trade or give away WIC foods, formula or checks.
 - Not make changes to the WIC checks (alterations).
 - Use the checks on or between the **First Day to Use** and the **Last Day to Use**.
 - Not verbally abuse, harass, threaten or physically harm WIC or store employees.

Customer noncompliance

- Customer noncompliance can occur for many reasons.
- Noncompliance can happen without intent or knowledge, such as their first time shopping with WIC checks.
- At other times, the customer may know which foods are WIC approved and the correct check cashing procedure, but will try to purchase other items.
- WIC staff want to help resolve both unintentional and intentional customer noncompliance as soon as it happens.
- Early intervention and education will help prevent future incidents.
- Retailers are encouraged to contact the WIC Customer Service Specialist at 1-800-841-1410 ext 3620 or the WIC coordinator(s) in their area.

Customer compliance noncompliance & complaints

Some examples of customer noncompliance

WIC food:

- Customer attempts to purchase non-WIC foods.
- Customer attempts to purchase more food than allowed.
- Customer asks for a rain check when food not available.
- Customer attempts to purchase non-food items.
- Customer attempts to exchange WIC foods for non-WIC items.
- Customer attempts to exchange WIC foods for cash or credit.

WIC check cashing procedure:

- Customer attempts to use a check payable to another store.
- Customer attempts to use a check after the **Last Day to Use**.
- Customer attempts to use a check before the **First Day to Use**.
- Customer attempts to use a pre-signed check.
- Customer attempts to use a check on which the signatures do not match the ID.
- Customer changes or alters WIC checks.
- Customer asks for cash back.

Rude customers:

- Customer verbally abuses store personnel.
- Customer threatens store personnel.
- Customer physically abuses store personnel.

How WIC clinic staff help customers comply with program rules

WIC clinic staff:

- Tell client/caregiver to select WIC foods
- Tell client/caregiver how to redeem WIC checks
- Tell client/caregiver about consequences of program noncompliance
- Review the R&R with client/caregiver and asks the client/caregiver to sign the agreement.

Customer compliance noncompliance & complaints

How retailers can help customers comply with program rules

Retail owners:

- Read and sign the WIC retailer contract and make sure you understand the rules.
- Make sure employees are trained in WIC retailer rules and procedures (listed in the WIC contract).
- Make sure WIC references are available for checkers.
- Make sure WIC foods are available for customers.

Checkers:

- Follow the WIC check cashing procedure.
- Verify the food selected by the customer.
- Verify the food amounts listed on the check.
- Use good customer service techniques with customers.

Complaint system

- The overall goal of a complaint system is to make things better.
- Complaints help retailers, clinic and state staff improve operations and the information we provide.
- Early intervention and education help prevent future problems.

Customer compliance noncompliance & complaints

How to make a complaint

Use the WIC customer incident report form on page 123.

- This is a faxable form.
- Use black ink.
- Fill out the detail requested on the form.
- Fax the form to our confidential fax number: (360) 236-3777
- Fax the form as soon as possible so our response is quick.

Information regarding the faxable WIC customer incident form:

- When you check a box on the form be sure to provide/explain details.
- Use additional paper if needed.

For example, if you check the box, "Does not know WIC approved food", be sure to tell us what food and if anything else happened. The detail might be, "Customer wanted to buy Kellogg's Frosted Flakes. When the checker told her no, she became verbally abusive to the grocery checker."

- The better the information the better our chance to prevent it from happening again.

Calling WIC with a complaint

- Call the WIC Customer Service Specialist at 1-800-841-1410 ext 3620.
- If you get a voicemail be sure to leave a detailed message.

Customer compliance noncompliance & complaints

Details to provide when making a complaint by phone

1. Who is reporting the complaint?

- Name
- Store name and location
- Phone number

2. When did it happen (date and approximate time)?

3. Who is the complaint about?

4. What happened (give as much detail as possible)?

- Client's/customer's name
- WIC check number
- Client's ID number

NOTE: The best way to get complaints resolved is by using the faxable form.

The faxable form is located on page 123.

The fax number is (360) 236-3777

